New-car sales plummet to a 22-year low

Continued from Page 3

percent a year ago, while Chrysler Corp. fell from a 12.42 percent share last year to 8.86 percent this year.

• Of the 13 U.S. makes, only AMC posted a sales gain (21.88 percent) over the year-ago period — and that was an estimate. All other lines declined, with Chrysler leading the plunge with a 61.35 percent sales sag, followed closely by Dodge, off 60.23 percent, Mercury, down 57.74 percent, and Plymouth, off 54.61 percent.

Also down were Ford and Lincoln, each suffering 47.89 percent declines; Pontiac, off 46.14 percent; Oldsmobile, down 40.89 percent; Chevrolet, down 39.77 percent; Cadillac, off 33.12 percent; VWoA, down 15.95 percent, and Buick, off 8.86 percent.

Chevrolet Citation was the biggest selling nameplate May 1-10, with sales of 9,159, followed by Chevrolet Chevette, 7,465; Ford Fairmont, 6,863; Chevrolet Malibu, 5,815, and Olds Cutlass Supreme, 5,778.

Year-to-date sales through May 10 totaled 2,533,182, down 20.71 percent from 3,194,941 last year.

Even Japanese pickups slip in April

Truck sales down in all segments

Continued from Page 8

163,932 units, including the imported pickups, compared with the year-earlier 271,925. The four-month total was 733,517, compared with 1,128,175 a year ago.

Ford outsold Chevrolet in April for the first time this year, and the margin of almost 10,000 units was enough to return the former to the No. 1 position.

During the month, Ford dealers retailed 69,469 new trucks, a decline of 36 percent from the year-ago 108,462. Sales of the Courier pickup were off 14 percent, from 7,377 last year to 6,346.

Over the four-month span, 284,762 Ford trucks were retailed, off 33.5 percent from last year's 428,456 units. The total included 29,028 Couriers, down 4.4 percent from the record 30,353 sold in the like period in 1979.

Sales in April by Chevrolet dealers plunged 44.3 percent, from 107,368 a year ago to 59,807. Included in the month's total were 7,756 LUV pickups, down 20.2 percent from last year's 9,724.

• Chevrolet's four-month sales dropped 37 percent below the year-earlier level, from 442,911 to 283,411. The LUV count was 35,454, a decline of 13 percent from the year-earlier 40,791 units, the four-month high.

Chrysler's Japanese-built compact pickups accounted for slightly more than 20 percent of April sales made by Dodge and Chrysler-Plymouth dealers during the month. Total sales of 19,783 units were off 36 percent from the year-earlier 30,935.

Dodge dealers sold 2,807 D-50 compacts during the month, down 19 percent from the year-ago 3,461, and Chrysler-Plymouth dealers retailed 1,372 Arrows, off 10.3 percent from last year's 1,530.

Four-month Chrysler truck sales totaled 95,653 units—almost 25 percent of them the compacts pickups—a decline of 36.1 percent from last year's 149,737. D-50 sales, however, were 44.8 percent higher than last year—15,862 versus 10,954—and the Arrow count was up 45.7 percent, from 5,276 to 7,689.

GMC dealers retailed 14,873 trucks in April, bringing the four-month count to 69,691 units. The total for the month dropped 40.9 percent below last year's 25,160, while the January-April count was 34.9 percent lower than the 107,071 sold in the like period in 1979.

April sales of four-wheel-drive Jeep vehicles were down 54.2 percent from a year ago, from 11,903 to 5,455. The four-month total of 29,494 units was 46.4 percent lower than last year's 55,041.

• In April, Volkswagen dealers retailed 2,778 compact pickups, bringing the four-month total to 8,281. Volume sales of these vehicles did not start until January.

Sales of the non-captive Japanese compact pickups were down in April, but the four-month totals showed gains over a year ago.

Datsun dealers sold 10,483 units during the month, off 10 percent from last year's 11,649. Through April, the total was 41,031, an increase of 20.7 percent over the year-ago 33,993.

Toyota sales during the month dropped 17.4 percent, from 11,912 a year ago to 9,837. For the four months, dealers retailed a record 51,161 units, an increase of 47.8 percent over the year-earlier 34,613.

April sales of the Mazda compact pickup fell 40.6 percent below the year-earlier count, 542 versus 913. The four-month total, however, was 25.6 percent higher, from 2,610 in 1979 to 3,277.

Mercedes-Benz of North America, which distributes Classes 6 and 7 mid-range diesel trucks in the U. S., reported that its dealers retailed 366 units during the month, up 8.9 percent over last year's 336.

Big Three April, year-to-date truck sales

	April		Year to Date	
	1980	1979	1980	1979
Ford				
Vans	11,977	16,321	38,609	66,711
Club Wagon	2,738	4,962	9,426	16,150
Courier	6,346	7,377	29,028	30,353
Bronco	2,228	6,002	12,896	26,287
Conventional pickups	39,925	64,732	171,121	257,347
Mediums	4,968	6,864	18,217	23,988
Heavies	1,287	2,204	5,465	7,620
Chevrolet				
Vans	7,653	16,426	35,723	65,699
Sportvan	1,512	2,898	6,990	71,843
LUV	7,756	9,724	35,454	40,791
El Camino	3,273	4,323	15,263	16,519
Blazer	1,538	5,142	9,701	23,699
Suburban	1,508	4,144	8,660	16,221
Conventional pickups	33,803	60,548	158,878	252,074
Mediums	2,541	3,816	11,796	14,806
Heavies	223	347	946	1,259
Chrysler				
Vans	5,927	9,428	26,212	50,857
Voyager	1,815	2,523	7,574	10,894
Sportsman	615	784	2,570	3,431
Arrow	1,372	1,530	7,689	5,276
D-50	2,807	3,461	15,862	10,954
Trail Duster	337	396	1,677	2,472
Ramcharger	514	1,006	3,676	6,326
Conventional pickups	6,396	11,807	30,393	59,527
GMC				
Vans	1,934	3,715	9,000	15,823
Caballero	371	558	1,595	2,232
Jimmy	288	973	2,016	5,060
Suburban	290	672	1,589	2,932
Conventional pickups	7,249	13,959	36,114	60,548
P models	405	376	1,449	1,653
Mediums	2,461	2,737	10,322	10,531
Heavies	1,875	2,104	7,606	8,018
Motor homes		65		274

factories list auction dates

American Motors

May 20—Aptco Auto Auction, 20911 Gladwin, Taylor, Mich.; D-A Auto Auction, Waltz Mill Rd., New Stanton, Pa.

May 21—Big D Auto Auction, W. Hwy. 80, Dallas; Kansas City Automobile Auction, 1100 Elmwood Ave., Kansas City, Mo.; Sand Mountain Auto Auction, U. S. 431, Boaz, Ala.

May 22—Fredericksburg Auto Auction, U. S. 1 Alt., Fredericksburg, Va.

May 27—Ohio Auto Auction, Columbus, O.

May 28—Southern Auto Sales, S. Main St., Warehouse Point, Conn.

May 30—Concord Auto Auction, 824 S. Taft, Mason City, Ia.

AMC sales are open to all dealers.

Chrysler Corp.

May 19—Clanton's Auto Auction, 1027 Pearl St., Darlington, S. C.; Arena Auto Auction, 10355 S. Woodlawn, Chicago.

May 20—Hatfield Recon Center, Rte. 309, Hatfield, Pa.; Birmingham Recon Center, 101 Miles Pkwy., Industrial Park, Pell City, Ala.; Metro Auto Auction of Kansas City, 101 W. Oldham Pkwy., Lee's Summit, Mo.; Southwest Auto Auction, 3420 S. 48th St., Phoenix.

May 21—St. Pete Auto Auction, 14950 Roosevelt Blvd., Clearwater, Fla.; Lafayette Recon Center, 3182 Rte. 11, Lafayette, N. Y.; Al Eide's Minneapolis Auto Auction, 1125 A Nathan Lane N., Minneapolis.

May 22—Auto City, 440 McClellan Hwy., East Boston, Mass.; Barberton Recon Center, 5075 Wooster Rd. W., Barberton, O.; Golden Gate Auto Auction, 6010 Stevenson Blvd., Fremont, Calif.

May 23—Floyd Hauhe Auto Auction, 12000 St. Charles Rock Rd., Bridgeton, Mo.

May 26—Clanton's Auto Auction, 1027 Pearl, Darlington, S.C.

May 27—Hatfield Recon Center, Rte. 309, Hatfield, Pa.; D-A Auto Auction, Waltz Mill Rd., New Stanton, Pa.; Lemay's Recon Center, Rte. 11A W., Laconia, N. H.; Arena Auto Auction, 10355 S. Woodlawn, Chicago, Capitol Auto Auction, 371 N. Beck St., Baton Rouge, La.; South Seattle Auto Auction, 19443 76th Ave. S., Kent, Wash.; Chrysler Leasing Corp. Used Vehicle Marshaling and Auction Center, 3500 W. MacArthur Blvd., Santa Ana, Calif.

May 28 — St. Pete Auto Auction, 14950 Roosevelt Blvd., Clearwater, Fla.; Al Eide's Minneapolis Auto Auction, 1125 A. Nathan Lane N., Minneapolis; Meyer & Sons, 6464 Downing St., Denver.

May 29—Auto City, 440 McClellan Hwy., East Boston, Mass.; Barberton Recon Center, 5075 Wooster Rd. W., Barberton, O.; Big H Recon Center, 918 Asbury, Houston.

May 30—Chrysler Corp. Detroit Marshaling Center, 6501 Lynch Rd., Detroit.

Chrysler sales are restricted to Chrysler Corp. dealers.

Used car sales

Auction averages

May to date	$3,230
Month ago	$3,091
Year ago	$2,999

Model breakdown

Auction averages

	May To Date	April	March
1980	$6,173	$6,322	$6,799
1979	4,582	4,940	5,108
1978	3,682	3,441	3,533
1977	2,627	2,642	2,691
1976	2,115	2,052	2,069
1975	1,619	1,737	1,769
1974	1,151	1,234	1,375
1973	982	1,037	991
OVERALL AVERAGE	$3,230	$3,102	$3,112

Output trails week ago and year ago

U.S. auto production still in the pits

By Michele Raquepau
Staff Writer

Auto production by U. S. makers last week declined from a week ago and a year ago.

Car output last week of 106,064 fell 13.72 percent from the 122,924 assembled in the previous week and dropped 51.32 percent from the 217,897 built in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date auto production of 2,655,902 is a 28.73 percent decline from the 3,726,387 units produced by this time in 1979.

American Motors' Kenosha plant was closed last week, but is scheduled to resume work today (May 19). AMC has 2.69 percent of year-to-date production.

All Chrysler Corp. car assembly plants will work regular schedules this week as they did last. Chrysler built 16,000 units last week and has 9.71 percent of the year's total.

Volkswagen of America worked overtime last week and is scheduled to work one hour of overtime this week on both shifts Monday through Thursday and eight hours both shifts Saturday. VWoA built 5,684 Rabbits last week and has 3.01 percent of year-to-date output.

General Motors, which had 10 plants down last week, produced 67,004 autos. GM has 64.84 percent of 1980 production.

This week, GM's Pontiac home plant will be down for the fourth of four weeks, as will the companion Fisher Body point.

GM's Arlington and Doraville (Malibu, Monte Carlo, Cutlass) plants will be closed this week. Janesville (Chevrolet) and Linden (Riviera, Toronado, Eldorado, Seville) will be down this week for the second of two weeks.

Ford Motor Co. had production cuts at 11 plants last week. Ford built 17,291 cars, and has 19.70 percent of year-to-date production.

Checker built 85 units last week and has 0.05 percent of the total.

200 at White face layoffs in heavy-truck revamping

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. —White Motor Corp. has begun a restructuring of its heavy-duty truck operations. The company said the move is designed to reduce costs in the face of current lower sales and provide the opportunity for increasing future earnings when the economy improves.

The program includes layoffs for more than 200 persons; relocating certain functions from Eastlake, O., to either the company's corporate office here or its truck assembly plants, and the eventual elimination of administrative functions at Eastlake.

Of those to be paid off, approximately 150 are at Eastlake and the remainder at branch and regional office locations across the U. S.

Of the approximately 300 remaining Eastlake employes, a limited number will be offered transfers as their functions are affected, White said.

White said it has restructured its assembly plant operations over the past two years and has already centralized its accounting and computer operations at locations other than Eastlake.

It also is reactivating a technical center in Farmington Hills, after the relocation of the corporate headquarters here in late 1979.

White Motor reported net income of $12,921,000 on sales of $1,211,023,000 for 1979, compared with a loss the year before.

In the first quarter of 1980, the company reported a net loss of $9,162,000 on sales of $284,555,000.

Truck production rises for week to 31,111 units

U. S. truck production last week of 31,111 rose 37.50 percent from the 22,626 units assembled the previous week, but fell 61.99 percent from the 81,851 units assembled in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date truck production of 696,006 is a 55.23 percent decline from the 1,554,498 built by this time in 1979.

All Chrysler truck plants are planning to work a regular schedule this week.

The Jeep Toledo plant is down this week for the third week in a row. Jeep is scheduled to resume production May 26.

General Motors' Janesville truck line will be down this week for the second of two weeks.

GM's Lordstown van line and St. Louis assembly points will be closed this week for the second of two weeks, as will Chevrolet Flint truck line Number One.

GMC in Pontiac will also be done this week because of a materials shortage.

Week's car build dips in Canada; trucks down, too

Both car and truck production in Canada last week declined from a week ago and a year ago.

Last week's auto production of 16,433 fell 27.95 percent from the 22,809 of the previous week, and dropped 16.05 percent from the 19,574 produced in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date auto output of 348,033 is a decline of 20.07 percent from the 435,415 assembled by this date in 1979.

General Motors built 10,160 units last week and has 62.40 percent of the year-to-date total. Ford Motor Co. assembled 6,048 cars last week and has 28.83 percent of the year's output.

Chrysler Corp.'s auto assembly plants were down last week and in the corresponding 1979 week. Chrysler has 7.51 percent of year-to-date production.

Volvo built 225 units last week and has 1.26 percent of the year's total.

Last week's truck output of 10,603 fell 13.15 percent from the previous week's 12,209 and dropped 28.75 percent from the 14,881 assembled in the comparable 1979 week.

Year-to-date truck production of 222,863 is a 27.29 percent decline from the 306,519 built by this time in 1979.

AMC's Brampton plant reopened last Monday with one shift working.

Chrysler's Windsor car assembly plant will be down this week for four days. Today (May 19) is a holiday for auto workers. The Windsor truck plant will work a regular schedule this week and will reinstate the second shift beginning June 2.

All GM plants will work regular schedules this week. GM has previously announced downtime scheduled at all its plants beginning May 26.

U. S. CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended May 17, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended May 10, 1980	May to Date	Jan. 1, to May 19, 1979	Jan. 1, to May 17, 1980
AMERICAN MOTORS		3,050*	2,978*	4,170*	48,758*	71,497*
Eagle						
Concord						
'78 AMX						
Pacer						
Spirit						
CHRYSLER CORP.	16,000	27,883	16,309	38,826	373,542	257,742
Plymouth Total	7,150	11,284	7,357	17,347	149,705	118,230
Horizon	3,350	4,093	3,350	7,995	66,623	62,913
Volare	2,900	6,898	2,972	7,017	80,015	43,409
'80 Gran Fury	500		649	1,388		9,288
Caravelle	400	293	386	947	3,067	2,620
Chrysler Total	2,250	5,784	2,126	5,343	76,855	33,177
Chrysler	350	2,409	302	876	33,269	8,008
LeBaron	1,900	3,375	1,824	4,467	43,586	25,169
Dodge Total	6,600	10,815	6,826	16,136	146,982	106,335
Omni	2,750	3,915	2,770	6,673	59,444	55,770
St. Regis	500	907	613	1,303	12,391	7,615
Diplomat	1,050	1,322	1,220	2,741	21,346	11,757
Aspen	2,300	4,671	2,223	5,419	53,801	31,193
FORD MOTOR	17,291	52,678	24,261	49,697	976,161	523,220
Ford Division	12,095	32,418	16,965	35,527	613,574	379,683
Pinto		4,517	3,377	4,673	74,084	38,598
Mustang II/Mustang	3,839	8,685	3,860	10,282	155,010	105,040
Fairmont	6,301	5,257	6,497	15,386	70,146	109,920
Granada		4,549	3,231	3,231	67,400	29,515
LTD II		996			18,663	
Thunderbird		7,830			137,522	58,317
Ford	1,955	584		1,955	90,749	38,293
L-M Division	5,196	20,260	7,296	14,170	362,587	143,537
Mercury Total	5,196	15,943	5,595	12,469	275,775	128,692
Bobcat		1,372	633	944	19,389	8,276
Capri	1,628	2,387	1,668	3,809	45,520	30,982
Zephyr	2,339	2,165	2,143	5,336	27,215	36,628
Monarch		2,376	1,151	1,151	35,007	8,944
Cougar/XR7		4,483			86,778	20,978
Mercury	1,229	3,160		1,229	61,866	22,884
Lincoln Total		4,317	1,701	1,701	86,812	14,845
Lincoln		2,261	584	584	43,236	5,410
Versailles		213	418	418	8,260	1,861
Mark VI		1,843	699	699	35,316	7,574
GENERAL MOTORS	67,004	129,678	75,132	175,915	2,264,931	1,722,211
Buick Division	14,489	20,557	14,311	35,556	337,013	340,516
Skyhawk		541			9,654	
Skylark/'79-'80	4,414	2,719	5,605	11,088	23,577	91,621
Century	4,060	1,308	4,228	10,090	22,021	74,562
Regal	4,860	6,752	3,893	10,225	117,142	87,865
Buick		7,661		1,390	135,718	65,370
Riviera	1,155	1,576	1,185	2,763	28,901	21,098
Cadillac Division	3,717	9,831	1,710	6,884	179,337	90,908
Seville	625	1,235	653	1,478	23,137	16,682
Cadillac	2,017	6,656		2,833	118,897	50,716
Eldorado	1,075	1,940	1,057	2,573	37,303	23,510
Chevrolet Division	31,925	53,064	36,276	81,760	954,956	721,119
Chevette	8,910	9,556	9,796	22,208	150,405	179,774
Monza	4,130	3,360	3,839	9,471	61,166	65,512
Camaro		6,796	3,741	5,229	122,002	53,614
Nova/Citation	10,345	7,464	9,271	23,129	76,638	187,552
Malibu	6,270	9,317	5,240	13,189	173,082	110,408
Monte Carlo	1,470	3,996	1,222	3,313	114,962	49,400
Chevrolet		11,590	2,367	3,302	237,542	56,759
Corvette	800	985	800	1,919	19,159	18,100
Oldsmobile Division	8,939	28,320	13,351	30,730	466,444	331,084
Starfire		401			8,489	
Omega/'79-'80	2,209	1,599	2,677	5,957	11,403	48,409
Cutlass	5,905	14,092	9,836	20,208	227,034	162,678
Oldsmobile		10,831		2,556	190,886	101,828
Toronado	825	1,397	838	2,009	28,632	18,169
Pontiac Division	7,934	17,906	9,484	20,985	327,181	238,584
Acadian†	790	364	789	1,823	8,302	10,673
Sunbird	3,230	2,299	2,952	7,365	39,580	59,628
Phoenix/'79-'80	3,238	1,874	3,395	7,771	22,036	54,662
Firebird		5,027	1,693	2,385	91,561	36,512
LeMans	676	2,031	655	1,510	42,540	22,658
Grand Prix		2,385			43,024	23,968
Pontiac		3,926		131	80,138	30,483
VOLKSWAGEN	5,684	4,503	4,167	11,652	61,231	79,984
CHECKER	85*	105	87	172	1,764	1,248
Total Cars, U. S.	106,064	217,897	122,924	280,432	3,726,387	2,655,902

CANADIAN CAR PRODUCTION

	Week Ended May 17, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended May 10, 1980	May to Date	Jan. 1, to May 19, 1979	Jan. 1, to May 17, 1980
CHRYSLER CORP.			3,148	3,148	53,221	26,149
FORD MOTOR	6,048	8,857	7,405	15,452	132,544	100,332
GENERAL MOTORS	10,160	10,537	12,031	26,985	246,125	217,177
VOLVO	225	180	225	540	3,525	4,375
Total Cars, Canada	16,433	19,574	22,809	46,125	435,415	348,033
N. American Cars	122,497	237,471	145,733	326,557	4,161,802	3,003,935
N. American Trucks	41,714	96,732	34,835	98,136	1,861,017	918,869
North American Cars and Trucks	164,211	334,203	180,568	424,693	6,022,819	3,922,804

—All Acadians and Caravelles are built for sale in Canada. *—Estimated.

TRUCK PRODUCTION IN U. S.†

	Week Ended May 17, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended May 10, 1980	May to Date	Jan. 1, to May 19, 1979	Jan. 1, to May 17, 1980
CHEVROLET	8,300*	27,582	8,332	20,940	483,127	225,664
DODGE/PLYMOUTH	3,800	9,225	3,745	9,060	198,900	58,471
FORD	10,032	26,649	2,292	19,088	549,250	252,218
GMC	3,396	8,314	3,183	8,403	142,189	69,030
INTERNATIONAL	2,820	3,167	2,694	6,508	59,182	9,325
MACK	620	752	452	1,296	14,987	10,972
WHITE	147	262	154	356	5,283	3,054
JEEP		4,500*		672	75,388*	35,833*
AM CORP.	284*	450	284*	682	9,172*	3,286*
VOLKSWAGEN	812		590	1,658		11,293
MISCELLANEOUS	900*	950	900	2,160	17,020	16,860*
Total Trucks, U. S.	31,111	81,851	22,626	70,823	1,554,498	696,006

CANADIAN TRUCK PRODUCTION

	Week Ended May 17, 1980	Same Week 1979	Week Ended May 10, 1980	May to Date	Jan. 1, to May 19, 1979	Jan. 1, to May 17, 1980
CHRYSLER CORP.	1,040	2,195	1,058	2,519	30,200	15,399
FORD MOTOR	3,148	5,883	4,597	9,158	114,495	77,104
GENERAL MOTORS	4,980	4,940	5,999	13,431	124,223	112,275
AMERICAN MOTORS	880	1,217		880	25,831	10,257
INTERNATIONAL	440	476	445	1,058	8,623	5,512
MACK	50	95	45	109	1,487	1,065
WHITE	65	75	65	158	1,660	1,251
Total Trucks, Canada	10,603	14,881	12,209	27,313	306,519	222,863
N. American Trucks	41,714	96,732	34,835	98,136	1,861,017	918,869

*—Revised. †—Now includes van production.
Jeep includes commercial vehicles only. AM General includes government-destined vehicles.

Automotive News

Detroit, May 26, 1980

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Move could boost clout in future negotiations

U.S. lifts duty to 25% on Japanese pickups

By Jake Kelderman
Washington Staff Writer

WASHINGTON. — The U. S. Customs Service dealt the importers of Japanese light pickup trucks a rather nasty blow last week, raising the import duty on the popular vehicles from 4 percent to 25 percent.

The immediate impact of the move against an industry that last year was valued at approximately $1.5 billion was not known, however, because Deputy U. S. International Trade Negotiator Robert Hormats said the Carter Administration is considering whether it will reduce or stick with the tariff increase.

The President has authority to reduce the tariff to about 8.5 percent and there is talk that he may do so in exchange for concessions from the Japanese government.

The U. S. is very keen on the Japanese opening its multibillion-dollar electronics communication market to U. S. companies. The Japanese have steadfastly refused to do so, however, and as recently as two weeks ago reaffirmed that position in trade talks with U. S. Trade Representative Reuben Askew.

Trade experts here say the new tariff schedule on light pickups will give the U. S. considerable new clout in its future negotiations with Japan.

Working against any change in the 25-percent rate, however, is pressure the Administration will receive from the powerful UAW and Ford Motor Co., which have been the leaders in Detroit's protectionist drive.

The UAW had been pushing for the duty increase as part of its effort to get the Japanese auto makers to build assembly plants here. A spokesman for the union said he welcomed the U. S. Customs decision and said it would send a message to the Japanese that the U. S. means business.

Ford Executive Vice President Fred G. Secrest said that "if the 25-percent rate is retained indefinitely — and we certainly hope and expect that it will be —it should provide more jobs in our truck plants resulting from increased sales of our U. S. pickup trucks."

• Ford imports its Courier pickup from its Japanese partner Toyo Kogyo but has plans to produce a similar vehicle here within the next two years.

General Motors, which imports its Chevy LUV pickup from its Japanese partner Isuzu, plans to market a domestic small pickup in 1981. It said it had no comment on the tariff issue.

The other American maker selling a Japanese light pickup, Chrysler Corp., also had no comment. A spokesman for the firm acknowledged however, that it is negotiating with its Japanese partner Mitsubishi to build a small pickup here on a joint venture.

A spokesman for the Datsun importer, Nissan Motor Corp. in U.S.A., said the company "was very sorry to hear of the decision," and said it "will adversely affect the U. S. consumer by increasing inflation and worsening U. S. dependence on foreign oil."

He said he hoped President Carter would reduce the tariff or at least grant the Japanese a 2 or 3-year grace period before instituting it.

Nissan Motor Co. of Japan has announced it will build a light pickup assembly plant here within three years. The spokesman for Nissan U.S.A. declined to say if the action by the Customs office will speed up that timetable.

A spokesman for Toyota Motor Sales U.S.A., Inc., the No. One importer of cars and trucks,

Continued on Page 52, Col. 1

Rolls revealed

New Silver Shadow groomed

The new Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow is smaller, lighter and more aerodynamic. Scheduled for European debut early in 1981, the new Silver Shadow maintains the traditional grille and mascot, but will have new rear suspension and a lighter, more economical V-8.

NADA lists six steps to ease crunch

White House pledges auto help

By Jake Kelderman
Washington Staff Writer

WASHINGTON. — The Carter Administration last week repeated its pledge to do something about the problems affecting the auto industry to NADA representatives.

But as in the case of an earlier meeting between the President and heads of the U. S. auto industry, the Administration would not say what it plans to do.

The dealers, headed by NADA President George Irvin, had been called to the White House to brief the Administration on what the problems in the auto industry are and what can be done about them.

Sources said President Carter's domestic advisor Stuart Eizenstat, Deputy Treasury Secretary Robert Carswell and other officials were "very sympathetic to our plight" but refused to be pinned down as to what the Administration's response to the situation will be.

"All they would tell us is that we can expect some action within weeks," the sources said.

The NADA group had gone to the White House carrying a letter to the President outlining six steps the organization thinks should be taken in the short term if the auto industry is to be saved quickly from its depression. These are:

1. The Federal Reserve Board should not interfere with declining interest rates. Administration policy should be to increase consumer confidence in stabilized interest rates to stimulate a return to normal car-and-truck sales levels.

2. "De Facto" credit controls levied upon automotive-related loans should be eliminated. (Observers expect this will happen, particularly in light of the fact that car loans were from the beginning to have been exempted from the President's March 14 order to limit credit expansion to no more than 9 percent).

3. Funds should be shifted to the Small Business Administration to fund an interest-subsidized loan program for franchised car and truck dealers who prove the need.

NADA is looking for a shift of approximately $100 million to SBA for the interest subsidy loan program (subsidy of 6 percent).

Dealers would qualify for the subsidy if they have been denied funds from another lending source, or if they are currently below the net working capital requirements set by the franchiser — NADA estimates a minimum of 40 percent of all dealers fall in this category — or if they have lost money (net profit before tax) in four of the last 12 months as reported by contract to the franchisor.

4. A refundable tax credit should be given retroactively to May 1, 1980, for purchases of new cars and trucks to dramatically increase the replacement of older and less-energy-efficient, less-safe and less-environmentally advanced vehicles with 1980 vehicles.

If dealers don't get rid of their 1979-80 inventory (estimated at 2,764,000 cars and trucks by NADA), there may not be much of a 1981 model year, the dealers told the President's advisors.

5. The federal excise tax on trucks should be eliminated, ef-

Continued on Page 53, Col. 2

breaking news

New J-cars only slightly smaller than X-cars

DETROIT.—General Motors' upcoming J-cars, which replace Chevy Monza and Pontiac Sunbird next spring, will be just a shade smaller than the X-car compacts, according to sources. Wheelbase on the new front-drive subcompacts is said to be 101.2 inches, compared with 104.9 inches on the X-cars. Overall length on the J is about 170 inches, and curb weight is about 2,350 pounds. The only available engine at the start of production is likely to be Chevy's new 1.8-liter four-cylinder, which should provide an EPA city rating of about 28 MPG.

Cougar replaces Monarch at Ford in '81

DEARBORN.—Ford will drop the Monarch name this fall when it introduces a redesigned Granada, based on the Fairmont platform. The Mercury stablemate to the '81 Granada will be called Cougar, while the Thunderbird twin will simply be called XR-7, according to sources.

NEWSPAPER

See BREAKING NEWS, Page 55, Col. 1

FTC gives tentative OK

Revised used-car rule gives dealers options

By Helen Kahn
Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON.—The Federal Trade Commission has tentatively accepted a new version of the used-car rule, leaving the dealer free to inspect using any reasonable method, or not to inspect or to merely check "Don't Know" on a required window sticker.

The commissioners also endorsed a staff-recommended comment period to get consumer reaction to the proposed sticker and for technical changes.

But the FTC, by majority vote, imposed its own separate 60-day comment period to see whether giving dealers the option of inspection will effectively deal with the deception that arises from oral promises given by salesmen. The commissioners made a few further changes that will make the already weakened rule even less stringent.

The present version is a direct outcome of the last commissioner's meeting (October, 1979) which concluded that optional inspection was less onerous than the earlier mandated inspection. The current tentative rule, calling for warranty disclosure as well as the results of any inspection, was started in 1973 by the FTC Seattle office.

With passage of the Magnuson-Moss Act in 1975 and an amendment mandating a used car rule—hung on unexpectedly by former Senator Vance Hartke, Indiana Democrat, who said

Continued on Page 54, Col. 4

truck industry news

Only heavies show gain over '79

3-month registrations dip to four-year low

First-quarter registrations of new trucks in the U. S. dropped to the lowest level in four years, with substantial downturns in two of the industry's three market segments.

The three-month total, according to R. L. Polk & Co. statistics, was 660,732, a decline of 24.4 percent below last year's 874,407 units. It was 11.6 percent lower than the 747,562 tallied in the corresponding period in 1977, but 4.4 percent higher than the year-earlier 632,862.

In March, registrations tumbled almost 31 percent, from last year's 317,351 to 219,400.

GVW table on Page 52.

The count was the lowest for any March since the 177,627 units tallied during that month in 1975.

Heavy trucks were the only ones to show an increase over a year ago, and that was due solely to the continued spectacular gains in sales of vehicles switched from gasoline to diesel power.

Groups 7 and 8 registrations for the three months were up 2.5 percent over a year ago, from 48,336 to a new high of 49,557.

It was the surge in Group 7 tallies that led to the advance in heavy-truck registrations. The total of 19,745 units was 81.9 percent higher than last year's 10,852. The Group 8 count was down 20.5 percent, from a record 37,484 in 1979 to 29,812.

Group 7's gains continue to expand the erosion of the Group 6 market. Three-month registrations of trucks in the top weight class in the medium-truck market were down 56.2 percent, from 33,207 a year ago to 14,534.

But the biggest loser among the industry's eight weight classifications was Group 4. In the January-March period, only

Continued on Page 47, Col. 4

Group 7 surge keeps heavies ahead of '79 pace

Registrations of new heavy trucks in the U. S. in the first three months of 1980 were up 2.5 percent over last year, but only because of the big increase in the number of Group 7 tallies.

In the first quarter, according to R. L. Polk & Co. statistics, 49,557 Groups 7 and 8 trucks were registered, compared with 48,336 in the like period a year ago. The March count, however, was down 9.7 percent, from 18,685 in 1979 to 16,876.

The three-month Group 7 total this year soared to a record 19,745 units, an increase of 81.9

Continued on Page 47, Col. 5

U. S. TRUCK REGISTRATIONS

THREE MONTHS, 1980 vs. 1979★

Based on R. L. Polk & Co. statistical report

	3 mos. 1980	Percent Share of '80 market	3 mos. 1979	Percent Share of '79 Market	Pct. pt. Change '80-'79
Ford	206,560	31.26	288,530	33.00	— 1.74
Chevrolet	204,885	31.01	285,498	32.65	— 1.64
Dodge	57,560	8.71	91,906	10.51	— 1.80
GMC	51,181	7.74	67,463	7.71	+ 0.03
Jeep	23,420	3.54	39,396	4.51	— 0.97
International	16,826	2.55	26,300	3.01	— 0.46
Plymouth*	7,876	1.19	4,719	0.54	+ 0.65
Mack	5,549	0.84	6,081	0.70	— 0.14
Kenworth	3,284	0.50	3,541	0.40	— 0.10
Freightliner	3,033	0.46	3,102	0.35	+ 0.11
Peterbilt	2,029	0.31	2,334	0.27	+ 0.04
White	1,385	0.21	2,787	0.32	— 0.11
Autocar	462	0.07	450	0.05	+ 0.02
Western Star	305	0.04	216	0.02	+ 0.02
Volvo	191	0.03	147	0.02	+ 0.01
Diamond Reo	23				
Miscellaneous**	76,163	11.53	51,935	5.94	+ 5.59
TOTALS	660,732	100.00	874,407	100.00	

★—No registrations for Oklahoma, 1980 and 1979, Hawaii, January-March, 1980, Kansas, February-March, 1980, Delaware, Utah and Hawaii, March, 1979.

NOTE: 1980 figures include window vans, 1979 totals do not.

U. S. HEAVY DUTY REGISTRATIONS

THREE MONTHS, 1980 vs. 1979★

Based on R. L. Polk & Co. statistical report

	3 mos. 1980	Percent Share of '80 market	3 mos. 1979	Percent Share of '79 Market	Pct. pt. Change '80-'79
Ford	10,620	21.43	8,975	18.57	+ 2.86
International	8,880	17.92	14,165	29.30	—11.38
GMC	8,205	16.56	4,352	9.00	+ 7.56
Mack	5,522	11.14	6,081	12.58	— 1.44
Chevrolet	4,787	9.66	1,537	3.18	+ 6.48
Kenworth	3,284	6.63	3,541	7.33	— 0.70
Freightliner	3,033	6.12	3,102	6.42	— 0.30
Peterbilt	2,029	4.09	2,334	4.83	— 0.74
White	1,385	2.79	2,789	5.77	— 2.98
Autocar	462	0.93	450	0.93	
Western Star	305	0.62	216	0.45	+ 0.17
Volvo	191	0.38	147	0.30	+ 0.08
Diamond Reo	23	0.05			+ 0.05
Miscellaneous	831	1.68	649	1.34	+ 0.34
TOTALS	49,557	100.00	48,336	100.00	

★—Groups 7 and 8 trucks only; no registrations for Oklahoma, 1980 and 1979, Hawaii, January-March, 1980, Kansas, February and March, 1980, Delaware, Utah and Hawaii, March, 1979.